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EDITORIAL SECTION

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Congress Back on First Page And Has Job Cut Out For It

BY N. O. MESSENGER.

PRESIDENT HARDING has not been so engrossed with the affairs of nine of the nations of the earth, presented by their envoys in conference here, that he could not find time to make a comprehensive survey of domestic conditions to present to Congress, upon its reconvening for the regular session, which was in one respect a notable affair.

There was the picture of the ambassadors and ministers of these conference-attending countries, with those of other countries as well; the high-class journalistic writers of all lands where the printing press whirs, with the American lawmakers and the executive administrators of the American government gathered in one hall, to hear the President make his recommendations.

Europe, Asia and the two Americas virtually touched elbows as the visitors sat below the rostrum from which the President addressed them.

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Congress "came back" with a rush and resumed its place on the front page of the great daily newspapers, from which it had been crowded for a while by the overshadowing arms conference. The President's message attracted widespread attention, judging from the display given it in the leading journals of the country. Well, he talked about things that the people are interested in and which they had all the time in the back of their minds, even while their eyes were focused for the time upon the fascinating international conference and its interesting figures.

Now the country may be expected to resume consideration of home issues, after trifling with the foreign dishes set by the arms conference.

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President Harding disclosed in his address the fact that he has kept constantly in touch with domestic questions and his comment upon them was in line with his characteristic mental process of dealing with big problems—matter-of-fact, business-like, safe and sane. And yet he did not hesitate to take advanced ground on suggestions for new treatment of the tariff question. It will have to be admitted that he has the courage of his convictions.

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What is the prospect for the legislation of the session? There is probably no leader in either body of the Congress who would risk his reputatoin as a prophet upon predicting the definite results of the long season of legislative grist-grinding which stretches ahead.

For instance, it now seems assured that the tariff making is to proceed under conditions which will render the process different from the construction of aforetime tariff laws. Old lines of action will be superseded by the new method, in which the operation of the "bloc" system will figure extensively, upsetting all the familiar standards of party procedure.

The republican party is charged with the responsibility of framing the new tariff law, and will be held to accountability in the elections next November for doing it. But will the republican party, as a political unit, make the law?

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A republican candidate for re-election to Congress might be expected to make the claim, in case his constituency proved dissatisfied with the law, that the party should not be held liable for the conglomerate measure that seems destined to come, but would he be able to "get away with it?" The watchful democratic minority will try to see to it that he does not succeed.

The ground will be taken by the democrats that the republicans, in power in every branch of the government, and by majorities phenomenal in size, are accountable in the utmost letter of the law for the bill.

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It is estimated now that the tariff can be made into law by next May. Granting that it turns out as hopefully predicted, and that it becomes operative immediately, its force and effect will be apparent by the time the campaign comes on. What will be its reaction in the political field?

There is one possibility holding out comfort to the republicans, and that is that employment conditions, now brightening, may operate to put the people in a better frame of mind, and that this condition will be added to whatever impetus is given industry by the tariff, the republicans to reap the benefit of it all.

Luck in politics is a recognized element, and the republicans still hope that luck will smile upon them. "Goodness knows," they say, "we had our share of bad luck," contemplating the feud of 1912 and the narrow margin by which they lost in 1916, which the old-time politician still avers was "just cussed bad luck."

There is said to be no reason to doubt that industrial and business conditions are on the upturn, due to natural causes of action and reaction, the philosopher and economist will say, but due to the beneficent rule of the republican party, the politician will claim.

Well, it won't be long now until the politicians will have an opportunity to try out their claim upon the voters.

Of course, it would profoundly shock President Harding and Secretary Hughes to suggest that political considerations should be taken into account at all in connection with the arms conference. And well it might, since their minds and hearts are fixed upon higher aspects. But we now are discussing the more sordid rank and file of the politicians, who would not hesitate a moment to attract unto themselves the reflected glory of the achievement looked for. The "low brows" are certainly looking forward to political assets in this direction.

And there is no reason now to apprehend that the conference will prove anything but a signal success. The Congress came back from its brief vacation to find the conference itself in a recess extending over several days. The pessimists and croakers had taken advantage of it to groan their dolefulest over the momentary cessation of progress evinced by visible signs.

But when the leaders talked with President Harding and Secretary Hughes, Senator Lodge and Mr. Root, they were told to be of good cheer; there was no change for the worse, but, on th contrary, everything looked highly promising.

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One of the cynical features of comment in circles surrounding the conference has been the suggestion that the administration has so much at stake in the success of the conference that advantage might be taken to wring concessions from the American delegation. That idea has not been harbored, however, by the conference leaders, who have sensed and appreciated the true attitude of the President and of the American delegation.

They know that with the President and the administration the objects of this world conference are far and above all political or party considerations. It is a question of principle now, which applies to every country a party to the conference. It is argued that the participating nations are on trial before the whole civilized world, and will be called upon to

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VANDERLIP EXPLAINS HIS PLAN FOR HANDLING EUROPEAN DEBT

In view of the widespread interest aroused in the plan proposed by Frank A. Vanderlip for utilizing the proceeds of the debt owed by the allied governments to the government of the United States for the rehabilitation and restoration of Europe, and the undoubted importance of his suggestions, The Star asked Mr. Vanderlip for a more detailed explanation of his plan. The article published below is the result.

By FRANK A. VANDERLIP.

QUESTIONS indicate interest.

There are certainly questions enough asked about the plan for handling the interallied indebtedness to the United States which I recently presented to the Economic Club to leave no doubt that people are interested.

That plan, briefly, suggested that the payment to us by the allies of the interest, and gradually the principal, of what they owe would probably not only be an impossible drain upon their resources, but so far as they did pay it would disorganize our industrial affairs, because payment would have to be made in goods. To avoid the danger of ruining our debtors and harming ourselves, it was suggested that for a time the interest payments be devoted to the rehabilitation of Europe, expended under our direction. There would be no relation between the source of the payment and the place of expenditure. Much of the expenditure would be in the form of revolving credits and would result in replacing allied obligation with obligations of other governments, but with the further specific security of the railway, grain warehouse, hydro-electric plant, or other work that had been undertaken.

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The most frequent question that is asked is: If the allies are unable to pay us interest on the debt, how would it be possible for them to put cash in our hands to make such expenditures as I have suggested for the rehabilitatio nof European economic life? It is apparently difficult for people to grasp the economic difference between making a payment to us here in America and making payments to be expended under our direction in Europe. If payments cannot be made to us here, many fail to see how they could be made if they were not brought here.

There is, I think, a distinct difference in the difficulties involved in the two forms of payment.

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Let us take, for example, the situation in Italy. Italy is one of the richest countries in Europe in its effective labor supply. It is one of the poorest countries in native raw material. There is at the present time much unemployment. The official figures of unemployment when I was in Italy were 450,000, and unemployment has been steadily increasing. Italy is doing better than almost any other European country in balancing its budget. It is not only levying taxes, but is collecting them. It has actually reduced its circulating notes, having cut down its note circulation from the high point more than 1,500,000,000 lire. The weakness of the Italian situation lies in the necessity for imports and the inability to export under present conditions. For the first five months of this year Italian imports were in excess of 6,500,000,000 lire, while exports were 2,677,000,000 lire, leaving excess of imports 3,848,000,000 lire.

If Italy were to pay us here in America, the deficit in her foreign trade balance would be increased by the amount she paid us. That is obviously impossible.

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On the other hand, if we were to undertake, for example, the development of hydro-electric power in Italy, she could readily furnish all the labor and a considerable amount of the industrial manufactures connected with such an undertaking. She could domestically raise the credit for that work. The result of such a program might well be the furnishing of a large amount of employment for the unemployed, a development of electric power that would ease the necessity for coal imports, which would help balance her foreign trade deficit, and the conversion of the debt which she could not possibly now pay us directly into an obligation that would give us all the security we now have, plus a lien on the hydro-electric plant which would be constructed. England could help with the enterprise, and at the same time make some payment of interest due us by constructing turbines and dynamos for export to Italy. No one's domestic industrial situation would be upset, and a great contribution would be made toward setting things going again industrially.

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Let us look at another project in some detail. The food situation in Europe could be immensely improved if modern systems of grain elevators were established in the agricultural districts of eastern Europe. All the labor necessary could be easily supplied in each of the countries where the elevators were constructed. The cost of that labor might be met by English payments, but the payment would not have to be made in foreign exchange. The moment that these non-manufacturing nations could obtain any credit in England they would spend it for English manufactured goods. England has two million idle men, and as many more working on short time. The English payment would be made, not in cash or foreign exchange, but in goods that eastern Europe is hungry for, while English mills are standing idle.

The necessary timber for such construction might in part, for example, come from Poland. Poland owes us a considerable amount, but has such an adverse balance of trade that she cannot pay outside debts in foreign currency values. She has almost unlimited forest products and plenty of labor to convert those into lumber. This program would stimulate her exports, giving her an outlet for something she can produce, instead of leaving her lumber as it is in its present stagnant position. Poland could easily export lumber to Rumania, whereas, of course, she cannot export lumber to the United States. Under such an arrangement the debt due us from Poland, which she cannot pay, would be converted into a debt due us from Rumania, for which there would be added security of the system of grain elevators which we would construct. While that arrangement would be beneficial to us, it would be of enormous benefit both to Rumania and to all food-consuming Europe.

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There are regions in Europe where the building of railroads would be followed by as rapid economic development as followed the construction of some of the railroads in our great west a generation ago. The food supply of Europe would be increased and the buying capacity of great masses of eastern European peasants would soon make itself felt in all the industrial nations of western Europe. If we undertook the construction of well located lines of this character, the direct labor would be found locally. The rails, rolling stock and locomotives could be built in England and France by men who are now idle. Such exports from England and France would not upset our domestic situation, but would quickly put hope and new vigor into the Eureopean situation and would be followed by new demands in England and France for the products of factories and mills; there would be reactions on every side that would be advantageous and we would have obtained for the interest claims that cannot be directly liquidated in payment to us fresh obligations from eastern European nations, plus liens upon railroads we constructed.

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There would undoubtedly develop creative programs which we might undertake both in England and France. There are great waterpower developments ready to be undertaken in France, but in the present state of government credit further loans for the purpose cannot be made. It would, nevertheless, be possible for France to make payments to us of funds that were to be directly expended within her own boundaries. The productive capacity of France could be increased, her fuel situation could be improved and the character of her obligation greatly benefited.

England desires to construct a series of great central electric power stations. She has all the means of doing that within herself, but has not the economic courage to start on such a great enterprise in the face of a situation where we may demand from her hundreds of millions of dollars a year if our claims were to be realized in payments made in the United States.

She could readily undertake such construction if for the time being she did not have to export goods into our market to meet our claim. She would increase her productive capacity, employ her idle workmen, put fresh courage into her industrial and economic situation by doing this, and we would have in addition to the obligation we now have the further security of the great power plants which were created.

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There is nothing really novel about such a program—the only novelty lies in the application to national obligations of those principles which a wise creditor would apply to a temporarily disabled debtor. Help put the debtor on his feet. Give him fresh courage. Give him a start toward increasing his earning capacity and the prospect of ultimate debt liquidation is improved. That sort of thing is done every day as between individual debtor and creditor. The difficulty seems to lie in thinking of the subject in international terms.

Quite another question is raised in connection with the carrying out of such a project. It is asked whether in view of the mess that governments have already made in conducting great undertakings it would be possible for our government to undertake successfully such a program. If Congress had to pass on each undertaking, if the projects were handled after the manner in which we improve inland waterways and construct public buildings, I would say, No. The work would need to be handed over to a properly constituted commission. I have sufficient faith in American genius to believe that we could properly construct such a commission. I have put it briefly by saying that I would put Herbert Hoover at the head of it, and would rest easy about the results. We have many such men of high motives, of sound imagination, of technical expertness, who would render in such a connection a very great international service.

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Some amazingly good work has been done in Europe by Americans in the days since the armistice. They have shown such a sense of fairness, such a grasp of method, such an ability to organize the forces there into self-helpfulness that I know we could successfully undertake such a program as I have outlined if we could put some of our best men at the job. The man who fears that we cannot trust the character, good sense and ability of Americans to undertake a work of this kind has less faith in his fellow countrymen than I have. I believe that we can.

The great task would only devolve gradually. At best we can only get a portion of this interest paid at once. We would only have to plan expenditure as rapidly as income developed. I feel profoundly certain, however, that sensibly to start on the program will result in rapidly developing the ability of our debtors to pay. With such a program wisely carried out they can, in time, discharge their full obligations to us. Some part I would certainly expend with no obligation for its direct return. We are talking now about remitting the debt, about sealing it, or about cutting down the interest for a period to a nominal rate. All that means giving up something. If we are willing to do that, why should we not give it up with the same generosity, but with much greater wisdom, by insisting that the full amount be devoted to the rehabilitation of the economic life of Europe and toward invigorating its social welfare?

Even if we get no direct return from some of the earlier interest payments, the indirect return would be greater than a direct return, for it would give the impetus, the confidence, the start toward self-helpfulness that Europe must have if the gravest dangers are to be avoided.

How Arms Conference Looks From Outside Looking In

BY G. GOULD LINCOLN.

THE Washington conference on the limitation of armament from the inside, looking out, will be public only when a member of the American or some other delegation undertakes to write his story of the conference.

The Washington conference from the outside, looking in, is another matter. The whole world, generally speaking, is engaged in this occupation. More particularly, however, there are 485 newspaper correspondents accredited to the conference, endeavoring daily to give the news of the conference, to interpret such glances of the eye as may come their way and to get the "atmosphere." Besides these observers for the press of the world there are gathered in Washington observers for various political factions in the nations of the world, not to mention the accredited diplomatic corps, who are keeping, their countries informed of the trend of events. Of the 485 correspondents accredited to the conference, eighty-seven of them are from overseas—as far as Australia, Japan, China and India.

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Looking at the conference from the outside, there are various points from which a view may be taken. First, there are the plenary, or open sessions, of which there have been four up to the present time. Second, there are the conferences which the spokesmen of various delegations hold daily with the newspaper men—and women. Third, there are the more private conversations which the newspaper men obtain individually with delegates or persons attached to the delegations.

In view of the demands from many sources that the conference be conducted with the utmost publicity possible, it may be said that the wish for publicity is being granted in a very large measure.

In fact, when Secretary Hughes, head of the American delegation, made his memorable address at the first session of the conference, which was "open," the world was astonished at the frankness in which he laid the cards on the table with reference to limitation of naval armaments. But necessarily, it was found, closed sessions of the conferees must be held at which the delegates could obtain information regarding various proposals advanced and give their views in a more or less intimate way

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At the outset, therefore, a plan was adopted by which the conference meets in committee of the whole, for the express purpose of obtaining information, and for preparing the various delegations for action. These committee meetings, it was explained by the highest authority, are preparatory to further open meetings at which discussion and final action may be taken by the conference on the major matters to which it is giving its attention. There are two major committees of the conference—one on the limitation of armaments, composed of members of the delegations of the five powers meeting on this subject—the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan—and the other on the problem of the far east, composed of the delegations of the nine powers taking part in discussions of those problems, the five already mentioned and Belgium, Holland, Portugal and China. In a way, this method of procedure follows the ordinary parliamentary procedure of the Senate and House, which first consider measures in subcommittees, usually behind closed doors, then in committee of the whole in their respective houses, usually with the doors open, and finally in the "Senate" and in the "House," the final parliamentary stage.

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With this method of precedure of the conference, it is impossible to bring forth agreements made in secret, in completed stage, without any notice to the peoples of the countries affected thereby. And in this feature the Washington conference is vastly different from the Versailles peace conference, or any other international conference held in the past, when the destines of nations have been involved.

At the conclusions of the committee meetings, there is issued a formal "communique," in the phraseology of Europe, or "statement" in the American language. These statements give in succinct form what has transpired behind closed doors. Sometimes these statements are lengthy, giving in complete detail the proposals advanced by different delegations, and the replies made by others, as for instance, when the Chinese delegation, in the committee on the far east, laid down its "ten principles" or proposals regarding the demands of China.

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In addition to the major committees of the conference, there have been appointed so far nine subcommittees, some of them composed of principal delegates to the conference and others made up of experts accompanying the delegations. These subcommittees are as follows:

Subcommitte of techinical naval advisers—Col. Roosevelt, chairman, United States; Admiral Beatty, British empire; Vice Admiral De Bon, France; Vice Admiral Acton, Italy; Vice Admiral Kato, Japan.

Subcommittee with respect to aircraft—Real Admiral Moffett, chairman, United States; Brig. Gen. Mitchell, United States; Air Vice Admiral Higgins, British empire; Col. Requin, France; Capt. Roper, France; Col. Moizo, Italy; Capt. Nagano, Japan.

Subcommittee with respect to laws of warfare—Prof. George G. Wilson, chairman, United States; Mr. Malkin, British empire; M. Fromageot, France; Count Pagliano, Italy; Mr. S. Tachi, Japan.

Subcommittee with respect to poison gases—Prof. Edgar F. Smith chairman, United States; Brig. Gen Fries, United States; Col. Bartholomew, British empire; Prof. Moureau, France; Prof. Mayer, France; Lieut. Col. Pentimalli, Italy; Maj. Gen. Haraguchi, Japan.

Subcommittee on question of foreign post offices in China—Senator Lodge, chairman, United States; Sir Auckland Geddes, British empire; Mr. Sze, China; M. Viviani, France; Mr. Hanihara, Japan.

Special drafting committee of subcommittee on questions of foreign post offices in China—Mr. MacMurray, chairman, United States; Sir John Jordan, British empire; Mr. Lampson, British empire; Mr. T. Z. Tyau, China; Mr. Kimura, Japan; Mr. Yoshino, Japan.

Subcommittee on Chinese revenue—Senator Underwood, chairman, United States; Baron de Cartier (alternate, Mr. Cattier), Belgium; Sir Robert Borden (alternate, Sir John Jordan), British empire; Mr. Koo, China; Mr. Sarraut, France; Senator Albertini (alternate, Mr. Fileti), Italy; Mr. Hanihara, Japan; Jonkheer Beelaerts van Blokland, Netherlands; Capt. Vasconcellos, Portugal.

Subcommittee on extraterritoriality—Senator Lodge, chairman, United States; Chevalier de Wouters, Belgium; Senator Pearce, British empire; Dr. Chung-Hui Wang, China; M. Surraut, France; Ambassador Ricci, Italy; Mr. Hanihara, Japan; Jonkheer van Karnebeek, Netherlands; Capt. Vasconcellos, Portugal.

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LLOYD GEORGE—The Man and His Times

By Philip Kerr
(His Secretary, 1917-1921.)

VII—Italy, Russia and the East

SOME of the greatest difficulties which confronted the peace conference arose out of treaties signed between the allies during the war. It was the eternal problem of reconciling contracts with altered circumstances.

Lloyd George held strongly that it would be fatal for nations to start repudiating treaties as soon as they did not suit their interests or because they were incompatible with an ideal solution. Nothing in his opinion would contribute more to create the bitterness and uncertainty which destroy international confidence and make co-operation impossible. Treaties were the laws governing international conduct, and, as such, ought to be regarded as very sacrosanct.

On the other hand, he considered that a selfish or pedantic insistence on treaty rights was almost as bad as repudiation. Circumstances were always changing, and as they changed laws and treaties had to be changed, too. He never hesitated, therefore, to urge modification on the parties to a treaty—only he contended that modification must be by consent.

Not only was consent the only road to further agreed modifications later on, it was the only way of securing execution. Peace conferences have no executive power, except against the enemy. Execution of decisions, therefore, depends upon the voluntary action of the parties concerned.

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These difficulties came to a head over the Italian frontiers and China. In 1915 a treaty had been signed between Italy, Russia, Great Britain and France, whereby Italy undertook to come into the war, while the allies undertook to support in the eventual negotiations for peace her claims to a large part of Dalmatia and also to certain other advantages in the eastern Mediterranean. The treaty was reasonable at the time. It secured the assistance of Italy in freedom's great struggle with German autocracy and militarism. The frontiers agreed to were fair as a strategic protection against the great Austro-Hungarian empire. The total disappearance of the Hapsburg monarchy, however, and the emergence of the idea of nationality as the basis of the European settlement changed the situation.

President Wilson, who was bound by no treaty, naturally stood out for frontiers between Italy and her neighbors corresponding to the nationality line, both on the ground that it was just in itself and because it was necessary to lasting peace in southeastern Europe. Orlando demanded steadfly his rights under the treaty—and Fiume in addition. France and Great Britain were torn in two: on the one hand they held themselves bound by the treaties they had signed; on the other they sympathized with the American view as to what was the wise and right thing to do.

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The dispute was long and a basis for compromise difficult to find. Finally Wilson announced that he would negotiate no longer, but would publish his case and appeal to the world. Lloyd George urged him to delay. He pointed out that Orlando was not the difficulty, but the intense national sentiment of Italy which refused to evacuate the territory concerned, and that publication would only harden that sentiment and make agreement impossible. Wilson agreed to a postponement for a couple of days. Lloyd George then set to work once more to try to bring Orlando and Wilson nearer to agreement. He had got some way and was hopeful of success, when the news came that Wilson's letter had been published on the stroke of time. As he had predicted, the effect of the letter was not to influence the Italian people toward moderation, but to excite them to fury. Orlando announced his intention of going immediately to Rome to consult his parliament. Lloyd George urged him not to go. He told him that he would have a triumphal journey, but that his triumph would make his own fall certain as soon as the excitement had died down and compromise was again in the air. But Orlando insisted, had his triumph, and within a few weeks had fallen from office. Eventually, two years later, the question was settled by direct agreement between Italy and Jugoslavia very much on the lines of the compromise Lloyd George had endeavored to bring about.

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The second difficult case was over Shantung and the Pacific Islands. In January, 1917, when the Germans started the unlimited submarine war the allied admiralties were at their wits' end to find anti-submarine craft. There was only Japan to turn to. Japan consented to send torpedo boats to protect the Mediterranean sea routes, but on condition that France and Great Britain agreed to support their claims to inherit German rights in the far east north of the equator in the final settlement. The admiralties were insistent that this naval assistance was vital, and in February the assurance was given, Japan at the same time undertaking to support any claim Britain might make to inherit German rights in the southern Pacific. It is curious to think that had the United States declared war two months earlier the assurance pledging the French and British attitude would never have been given.

When the peace conference, therefore, came to deal with the matter France and Great Britain found themselves in the same situation as in the case of Italy. The difficulty was further increased by the fact that the Chinese, who, despite their numbers, had evolved no effective stregnth of their own, had also made treaties yielding rights to Japan in Shantung. Japan, therefore, had a good legal case, though the Chinese urged that these treaties had been obtained by force majeure.

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President Wilson stood out for the full Chinese claims, the Japanese for their full treaty rights. In between stood M. Clemenceau and Mr. Lloyd George, refusing to repudiate their treaty obligations, but endeavoring to arrange a compromise. As usual in politics, it was not a question of deciding what was ideally right, but of what it was possible to persuade Japan, who was in possession, to agree to execute. It was Lloyd George's view that the best practicable plan was to make an agreement which definitely re-established Chinese sovereignty in Shantung, created Kaio-Chao a treaty port, but left Japan with Germany's economic rights defined under a treaty guarantee. This was substantially the plan eventually agreed upon. The Chinese delegates, however, taking the view that such an agreement was incompatible with their independence, refused to sign the treaty, which fell to the ground, and the Japanese remained in occupation.

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The Russian problem brooded over the whole conference like a nightmare. At one of its opening meetings Lloyd George said that the peace conference would fail to be worthy of its name unless it did something to restore peace to Russia. Hence the proposal to bring together representatives of the allies, of the bolsheviks and of Deniken and Koltchalk at Prinkipo to discuss the basis of a peaceful settlement.

Lloyd George has always taken a rather unorthodox view of the Russian situation. A lifelong liberal, he had no sympathy with the tzarist regime; a keen student of the French revolution, he had an instinctive grasp of the forces at work and of the way in which things would work out. He was never afraid of bolshevism as such. He thought the fervor of the revolutionary enthusiasm, with its madly idealist experiments and awful terrorism, would gradually yield to the facts of life, and settle down to much the same kind of government, only under new labels, that Russia had had before. He used often to draw comparisons, indeed, between the Russian and French revolutions, between Lenin and Trotsky, and Robespierre and Marat, to the great indignation of his French colleagues. His view always was that the best course would be to get all parties together and try to induce them to stop fighting and combine in rebuilding Russia on better lines.

But peace was impracticable. Neither the bolsheviks nor the old Russians were really ready to meet, because neither was willing to yield any part of Russia to the other, and the allies were deeply divided themselves as to the policy to be pursued. So the civil war in Russia continued, with the allies alternating between the policy of helping the anti-bolsheviks and toying with fresh proposals for peace. And to the end of the conference Russia remained what, to a great extent it still remains, an unsolved enigma.

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The last problem which confronted the conference was that of the near east and the German colonies. It raised the mandatory question in an acute form. It was clear that many peoples in the world, especially in Africa, were still quite incapable of conducting a stable government under the fierce pressure of modern political and economic competition. Some civilized power must take charge and supervise their government until they had learned how to govern themselves. President Wilson wished to enshrine this principle in the peace by transferring all German colonies and Turkish territories to the league of nations, and making it govern them direct. France and Britain both thought the league incapable of doing such work. Clemenceau advocated out-and-out annexation by a civilized power, Lloyd George an intermediate system whereby the mandatory power should be responsible to the league of nations, which should have the duty of seeing that it lived up to its responsibilities. It was on these lines that the solution embodied in article 21 of the covenant was based.

So far as the German colonies were concerned it was then decided that the powers which had fought the German forces should become the mandatory powers. The real difficulty arose over the near east. Was Constantinople to be internationalized, and, if so, who was to provide the police and military forces necessary for its protection? How were the Greek and other minorities to be protected in Turkey? What about Armenia, where, in an area which had once been Armenian, the Armenians were now, largely, thanks to massacre, in a hopeless minority, and, therefore, incapable of maintaining a government. A mandatory was the only solution, yet who was to be that mandatory? Then there were the rights of Italy under the treaty of London, the aspirations of Greece, the strong divergence between Great Britain and France as to their respective mandatory spheres in Arabia, the desire of the Arab intelligentsia to run before they had learned to stand, and last, but by no means least, the Balfour declaration and the Zionist aspirations in Palestine.

The problem was intolerably complex. Whichever way one turned one met an insurmountable difficulty. Lloyd George thought that the key to the solution was that the United States should be given the free hand to deal with Constantinople, Turkey and Armenia, as she chose, but the other allies were opposed, and it gradually became clear that the United States was against taking any kind of mandatory responsibility at all. Eventually the conference dispersed with nothing done, and left the supreme council to attempt to patch things together by degrees.

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Who took the predominant part in the settlement of Versailles? The question admits of no precise answer. Facts were, as always in politics, the decisive things. No statesman, however eminent and strong, can alter them, and the peace of Paris was fundamentally governed by the facts of Europe at the time. None the less, the personal factor is immensely important. Of personalities at Paris, three were dominant, Clemenceau, Wilson and Lloyd George. They were all strong and able men. No one of them was in any sense subordinate to or under the influence of the other. Each exercised decisive influence. Wilson was always looking forward to a new world. Clemenceau looked backward, seeing Europe as it was and thinking that it would remain what it had always been. Lloyd George stood between the two, always anxious to move forward, but refusing to go ahead of what he thought the people could stand, and day after day shaping conclusions into practical reforms. The combination was a good one. The peace would have been a bad peace had any of the three elements been missing.

Lloyd George clearly saw that the peace had many defects. There were features in it which he would have altered. But he thought that on the whole it was as good as it was reasonable to expect victorious nations to agree to so near to the termination of a world war. Some of the worst dangers, such as the dismemberment of Germany, had been avoided. Other difficult features connected with the Saar valley and the occupation of German territory were temporary. Looking, as always, at the practical possibilities of the time, Lloyd George thought that the foundation of a new and better Europe had been truly laid.

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In the first place, instead of the Hohenzollern and Hapsburg military despotisms, democracy had prevailed right up to the Russian border. The fact that governments were now at last amenable to the peoples they governed was, in Lloyd George's opinion, the greatest single safeguard against war. Democracies may get war mad, and may be infected by racial hatred or greed, but they are never likely to plot and plan war for reasons of personal profit and aggrandizement as are governments controlled by courtier or military cliques.

Secondly, Europe, for the first time, was founded fairly and squarely upon nationality. There were great economic disadvantages in the solution, as everybody now sees. But the greatest cankers in the old system, the cutting up of nationalities between conflicting autocratic empires, had been removed.

Thirdly, the idea had been definitely laid down in the peace that war was the concern of all nations, and that they must combine to try to prevent it by conference and negotiation before having recourse to force. Lloyd George did not think the machinery of the league was perfect, but he was convinced that the idea for which it stands had come to stay.

Finally, a commencement had been made with disarmament. Conscription had been abolished in central Europe. As we have seen, Lloyd George endeavored to induce the allies to enter into some arrangement about armaments at Paris. The Washington conference, indeed, is giving effect at a more seasonable time to what Lloyd George had originally proposed.

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For the rest, Lloyd George has too keen a historical sense to believe that any settlement could bring a millennium or attempt to make one which could be final. Every treaty, every peace is but a milestone, registering the position at this time, but the highway runs on all the time, and it is at further milestones along that highway that the ideals disappointed in 1919 will come to fruition.

It is the fashion today to decry the work of the peace conference. History will probably reverse that judgment. If anything, the peace conference was ahead of its times. It planned a settlement which contained within itself no seeds of fresh war, and it created machinery designed to adjust international differences by conference and conciliation. The hopes of mankind have been frustrated not so much because the settlement was bad, but because the nations have not been able to live up to it. Passion, fear and prejudice still dominate the old world, and indifference and self-centeredness the new. Had the nations set to work to make the best of the peace and of the machinery it created, instead of crabbing it and settling back into their old grooves, things might be far better than they are today.

NEXT SUNDAY—Lloyd George Since the War.